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## THE DOLLARS AND CENTS OF ART.

Some Information for the People.

**T**HERE never has been a time in the history of this country when so many works of art were upon the market as now. A thorough examination of studios and sales-rooms convinces us, that in New-York city alone, there are paintings enough seeking a market, to supply the ordinary demand of the whole country for the current year. Notwithstanding this artists are even more industrious than usual—the better class upon commissions, but the majority upon works designed for the spring exhibition, or for such chance sale as they may be able to command.

All this is indicative of two things, viz.: an unusual interest in art upon the part of the people, and a large increase in the number of artists. The great laws of demand and supply hold as good in the world of painting and sculpture as in the world of utilitarian art; and though the select few, who plead for the necessity of entirely dissevering art from commerce, may logically prove their premises, the great fact becomes monthly more apparent that the potent charm of dollars and cents can and does lure artists into all manner of activity to meet any demand that does, or may exist. We have yet to know that any of the "high art" gentlemen are free from this love of lucre—that they "worship art for its own sake." It is so easy to preach pretty philosophy; but it is another thing to practise it at the expense even of a little commission.

Our view of this state of affairs, we are free to confess, is a hopeful one. The more laborers in the field the better—the more works produced the better, even if some of them are inferior. As a people, Americans cannot, and will not recognize exclusiveness. If it were possible for the "high-art" philosophers to carry their point, and only paint first-class works, at first-class prices (which only the rich, of course, could purchase and hold) we should despair of any progress on the part of the people in art-taste and culture. It is by giving *all classes* access to, and possessionhip of, works of the studio and burin, that a love for the beautiful must become a common trait; and, out of this common love must spring the culture and taste which eventually will demand for their satisfaction the highest works of our

art-genius. Exclusiveness of possessory even, would be as great an evil as aristocracy in social life, or as selection in the matter of education: let *all* have property in art, let *all* feel a personal interest in it, *all* talk more or less knowingly about it, and we shall, ere many years, see the good fruits of the common interest in the high refinement of our common country.

We are, therefore, pleased at the evidences of industry among artists—at the spirit of emulation which prevails among them, and at the ambition which inspires so many to enter the field of competition for favor; it augurs an ability of production which—with the experience and culture that keen competition is sure to bring—must result in great works and permanent effects upon our public taste. The artists themselves are, perhaps, temporarily the sufferers, for they are compelled to accept a merely commercial price for their labor; they are not at liberty to name their own prices, but must accept such terms as the trade and usage will fix. Of course, these terms will be qualified by the artist's reputation or individual excellence; still, we find that there is a standard already recognized by which art-dealers, as well as connoisseur "patrons," are governed in their purchases. As works multiply, this standard, according to the immutable laws of trade and compensations, must deteriorate, even from its present point, and we probably shall see good works of the easel ere long placed within easy reach of persons of small means and moderate pretensions.

By frequent attendance upon sales, by many purchases, by much association with artists, we are prepared to make these general remarks concerning this trade-standard. Artists of the elder class, whose reputation gives them commissions sufficient to employ their time wholly, have no really fixed price. A good work by Durand, Kensett, Hicks, Huntington, &c., can be had for three hundred dollars, while they command a thousand dollars for some of their more elaborate labors. Church obtains his own price, for he paints only one picture where one hundred are asked. The same thing may be said of no artist in the country, except it be of James Hart, whose superb canvases are daily becoming more difficult to obtain. The pictures of Cropsey are not scarce, and command but moderate prices. Some of his best small paintings

have, within the last year, been put upon the market by private holders, and have ranged in prices from forty to two hundred dollars. William Hart, Coleman, Shattuck, Gignoux, Mignot, Casilear, Buchanan Read, Sonntag, and artists of their class, average about three hundred dollars for their medium sized works. Good pieces of theirs may be had for sixty dollars, though, the canvass must be small at such a price. Works worth more than five hundred dollars are in such slow demand that the artists named are rarely tempted into their composition. The hunting and game pieces of Tait are in great demand, and bring, readily, from one hundred and fifty to five hundred dollars. The exquisite little "chicken" and deer compositions of this artist are now very hard to obtain, and quickly command from eighty to one hundred dollars. The fruit pieces of G. H. Hall and Mrs. Lily Spencer are popular, and pass off readily at from forty to one hundred dollars for the smaller canvasses, and proportionate prices for the more labored works. The works of Hays command about the same figures as those of Tait.

These may be named as the current sales prices of works by artists of the leading class. After these come a large number of workers of much merit, and, in many instances, of no inconsiderable popularity, whose productions rate at prices, say one third to one half of those named above. Many a charming landscape and figure piece of size, say fourteen by twenty inches, can be had for from forty to sixty dollars; and at these figures the painters live well—many of them working industriously and saving closely for the laudable purpose of being able to go abroad for study and observation. Below this class comes a still younger race of candidates for favor, who, though not destitute of merit, still are immature and untutored, and their works only find the cash in the auction rooms or show windows of the picture-framer. Twenty to fifty dollars is regarded as a good figure for this class of pictures of the size, say twenty by thirty inches. At auction they frequently sell for much less, owing to a competition with the flood of foreign pictures, which is constantly pouring in upon us from the studios, ateliers, and shops of the great art-centres of the Old World. Immense numbers of "passable" pictures are sold here annually for from ten to twenty dollars each.

Below this there is another class of producers, namely: those who hire themselves out by the month to certain well-known "auctioneers," who, by a great dash display of frames and gas light, in some well-chosen store on Broadway or the Bowery, succeed in palming off upon "greenhorns," with more money than art-sense, a large number of most detestable daubs, at an average good price. No sooner is one store full sold off "at an alarming sacrifice" than another is ready which "must be sold to close out a consignment." It is estimated that there are two hundred "artists" in the employ of these mock auction shops. That such a trade is a swindle there can be no doubt, and the dealers deserve arrest for their imposture just as much as Van Sicklen for his sales of gold watches made out of poor brass.

With this data, the reader will be able to form some estimate of the general standard which now obtains for art-works. A knowledge of art is necessary to pronounce upon the actual worth of any particular production; and with such a knowledge no difficulty will be experienced in making a correct commercial valuation, since the standards and relative values are now fixed as above stated.

In writing this we have sought to disparage none—to over-estimate none. Our purpose has been solely to advise our thirty thousand subscribers and one hundred and fifty thousand readers upon a subject which often excites their queries, but upon which, so far as we know, very little information has been given by those would-be-conservatives of art-taste—the "critics" of the daily and weekly press; while, of the artists themselves, the smallest possible amount of information can be had by an "outsider," so loath are they to betray the mysteries of their profession.

#### MISS LOUISA LANDER'S WORK.

THIS is a life size reclining figure of the Young Maiden whom Longfellow has described

"Under the boughs of Washita willows, that grew  
by the margin where—  
—as she slumbered beneath it."

It is the work of Miss Louisa Lander, of Salem, Mass., and which, with a most powerful bust (also from her hand) of "Hawthorne," is on exhibition at the Dusseldorf Gallery. We believe this young lady will, with careful study, ultimately

take a leading position in her art, and trust, most sincerely, she will receive—from those whom Providence has blessed with riches—that support and fostering care which shall render her onward path free from those thorns that generally beset the student's way.

It would be out of place here more than to allude to the facts that, *by her works alone, and not by fortune's aid*, does Miss Lander seek to live. Her art, and the proper study of it, called her forth to wander among strangers, in a strange land, although she would, no doubt, gladly have remained to cheer the declining years of an aged and much-loved father, whose joy and pride must necessarily be in his daughter's success, and, to insure that we do hope to hear of numerous commissions being forwarded to her, and that the "Evangeline" may find a ready and liberal purchaser. The bust of "Hawthorne" is that gentleman's property, and has been kindly loaned for exhibition in order to serve Miss Lander's interests.

She is now engaged on a life-size figure of "Virginia Dare," the first white child born in this country—a small statuette of which has been exhibited lately in her native city, and met with the unqualified praise from those artists and critics who have seen it.

#### TITO ANGELINI.

 *L primo peccato*," or "The First Sin," is the title of a statuette, now exhibiting at the Dusseldorf Gallery, which, by permission of its owner—the Hon. Robert Dale Owen —has been placed there for a short time. It is the work of "Tito Angelini," the favorite pupil of the great sculptor, Tenerani.

The life of the true artist is wholly devoted to his work; not that he need necessarily estrange himself from the world, but, on the contrary, lives, as it were, on the *public* realization of his creations and ideas. Always intent upon rendering his name immortal in his profession, he seldom entirely gives up one for the other.

Tito Angelini possessed little besides his talent for the art of modelling, or working in clay. He was born in Naples, March 10, 1807, and was the son of Costango Angelini, himself a celebrated artist. Under the direction of such an instructor, from his ninth year, he began to

design and model and gave promise of what, in a short time, he might become.

When a little over seventeen he passed a public examination and was sent to study in Rome by the Neapolitan Government. After four years patient labor and hard study, he was pronounced perfect in his art, and his name honorably mentioned in the catalogues which appeared shortly afterward. From this time he was unanimously pronounced master of a talent and industry before unequalled. His studio was visited by all the best judges of art, who, while they were astonished and delighted with such exquisite and finished execution, almost doubted its being the work of one man's hand. While studying in Italy he acquired the strong friendship of the two illustrious sculptors, Bartolini and Tenerani, but more particularly that of the latter, which ripened into a tender and affectionate intimacy. In 1847 he visited Paris, where he was received by all the artists with the utmost honor and distinction, particularly by the members of the French Institute. He was honored by a commission for a bust of the Duchess D'Aumale, for the Queen of the French, and also one of the Archbishop of Toronto. He received, with the proposal for the Institute, the Cross of the Legion of Honor, signed by Guizot, and a noble and complimentary speech from Louis Philippe, the King. This, toward an Italian, was then of rare occurrence.

It would take too much space to give a list of upward of one hundred of his most celebrated works, which now lies before us. We can but hope that many of his works will find an abiding place in this country—a land which the artist has a great and longing desire to behold.

The artist has executed for Mr. Curtis, of New-York, a statuette "Una Baccante." Also has filled one or two commissions for Mr. Robb, late of New-Orleans. These, with the statuette of "Eve," above referred to, are, we believe, his only works in this country.

 A vast amount of foreign marble is finding market in this country—chiefly the work of students in the studios of Florence, Rome, Genoa, &c. It is not, as a general thing, particularly good nor particularly bad, though it does sometimes victimize a *green* purchaser. Parties should be wary of purchasing until they are sure of what they buy.